



SHUR Newsletter No 2

27/07/2007

with this second newsletter, we would like to update you on the most recent development of the SHUR project on **Human Rights in Conflict: the Role of Civil Society (SHUR)**. For more info please visit <http://www.luiss.it/shur>

SHUR working paper series

Shur working paper 3 *Conflict Society and Human Rights*

by Raffaele Marchetti and Nathalie Tocci, LUISS.

Civil society plays a fundamental role in fostering democracy in peaceful societies, helping to popularise a wide range of public policy issues. Yet the political significance of civil society may be far more prominent in conflict contexts. Being characterised by a higher degree of politicisation and a less structured institutional setting, these scenarios generate a more intense mobilisation of civil society that actively shapes the nature of politics and policy. The different understandings of the causes of conflict and their adequate responses however leads to the formation of civil society actors and ensuing actions that can either fuel conflict, sustain the status quo, or build peace. In order to tackle the interrelationship between civil society, conflict and human rights, shurwp03-07 is structured as follows. In a first section, analyse the implications of context on civil society, and more precisely the impact and implications that statehood, democracy, nationalism, development and international presence have on the nature of civil society. In section two we introduce more specifically the role of civil society in ethno-political conflicts, or as we rename it 'conflict society'. We then turn to different factors determining the impact of civil society on conflicts. In particular we analyse the impact of their political identities, frameworks of action and political opportunity structures in which they operate. In a final section we apply this analytical framework to the impact on human rights in conflicts, concluding

with three broad hypotheses on the relationship between civil society, conflicts and human rights.
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Shur working paper 4 *Conflict Society and Human Rights: A Gender Analysis*

by Diana Copper, LUISS

In an increasingly globalised world characterised by weakened states and privatisation of politics, civil society plays a key role in fostering democracy and bringing forward political change. Within the context of SHUR civil society is analysed as a pivotal actor in conflict, both causing and preventing human rights violations, hampering or progressing social justice and equality in the pursuit of durable peace. In this paper civil society organisations in conflict societies are analysed from a gender perspective; and gender is mapped out on the classification of civil society organisations, and roles these organisations fulfil within conflict situations that are relevant to SHUR's scope of analysis. [download pdf](#)

Shur working paper 5 *The Concept of Securitisation as a Tool for Analysing the Role of Human Rights-Related Civil Society in Ethno-Political Conflicts*

by Thorsten Gromes and Thorsten Bonacker, University of Marburg.

This working paper serves to assess the relevance of the securitisation concept in studying the role human rights-related civil society plays in ethno-political conflict. As it is quite abstract and parsimonious, the securitisation concept may contribute to research on human rights-related civil society activities in ethno-political conflict. Taking civil society actors as focus, we can analyse their non-securitising, securitising, and desecuritising moves using human rights as a reference. While it is somewhat easy to demonstrate the failure of those activities, it is quite challenging to trace the causal line from the positive outcome to the activities by a civil society group. But that also should mean that one goal of such a research using the securitisation concept is to sum up best practices and lessons learned about desecuritisation und non-securitisation processes that are influenced by civil society actors in ethno-political conflicts. The paper suggests treating both the state of human rights and the conflict stage not only as result of the civil society activities, but as their cause as well. [download pdf](#)

Shur working paper 6 *A Comprehensive Understanding of Civil Society. A Normative Proposal*

by Valentina Gentile, LUISS.

This paper intends to offer a reconstruction of the notion of civil society in the light of its philosophical tradition. The core idea is to formulate a comprehensive notion of civil society that has a clear normative claim: it represents the model of reference for analysing the concrete situations of conflict. In order to ensure an effective role for civil society in conflict resolution and democratic consolidation the sphere of civil society has to guarantee a crucial equilibrium among economic, cultural and political forces. Contemporary approaches to civil society tend to distinguish these three spheres, giving, in turn, the priority to one of them over the others. Such approaches are not able to grasp all the instances involved in the sphere of civil society. Furthermore, taking a normative perspective, it seems that these approaches run the risk to deny civil society itself. Civil society is the realm of conflicting interests and values. It is the space, in which individual identities meet collective claims and affiliations. In such context, the equilibrium among cultural, economic and political forces is crucial in order to overcome the conflict and preserve civil society as the domain of freedom. In situation of conflicts, this characteristic of civil society becomes particularly relevant. The positive impact of civil society in ensuring a bottom up approach to conflict resolution and in constructing a legitimate political authority depends crucially on the preservation of this inclusive attitude. [download pdf](#)

Events

❖ **Annual conference of the association of Human Rights Institute**

<http://www.bgcentar.org.yu/index.php?p=444>

❖ **Methods of Human Rights Research**

<http://www.unimaas.nl/default.asp?template=werkveld.htm&id=26VB61UR23S7X2SKT274&id=26VB61UR23S7X2SKT274&taal=nl>

❖ **International Human Rights Short Course**

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/law/hrlc/courses/ihrl.php>

Recent publications on SHUR themes

Tocci, N. (2007) ***The EU and Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the Backyard.*** Routledge

Conflict resolution features strongly as an objective of the European Union's foreign policy. In promoting this aim, the EU's geographical focus has rested primarily in its beleaguered backyard to the south and to the east. The Union's foreign policy instruments are well placed to promote peace in the neighbourhood. In particular, EU contractual relations – ranging from the accession process to looser forms of association - can play a constructive role in conflict resolution. Through the study of five ethno-political conflicts lying on or just beyond Europe's borders, this book analyses the impact and effectiveness of EU contractual relations on conflict resolution. Impact and effectiveness in Cyprus, Turkey, Serbia-Montenegro, Israel-Palestine and Georgia are assessed by contrasting the EU's declared aims in these conflicts with their evolution on the ground. The conclusions are sobering. Despite its potential to contribute significantly - and sometimes decisively - to conflict resolution, the EU has in practice punched well below its weight. On some occasions, it has contributed positively to conflict resolution, although underperforming with respect to its potential; on other occasions, it has unwittingly fuelled stalemate or retrenchment into conflict. The reasons underlying this underperformance need not be sought either in the objective limits of the EU's foreign policy instruments, or in the Union's much-quoted internal divisions. As the book reveals through in-depth interviews with all the relevant actors, the gap between EU potential and effectiveness in practice often rests in the specific manner in which, the EU collectively chooses to conduct its contractual relations.

Jana Arloth, Frauke Seidensticker (2007), ***The ESDP Crisis Management Operations of the European Union and Human Rights.*** German Institute for Human Rights.
http://files.institut-fuer-enschenrechte.de/488/d65_v1_file_4649796b19cd6_Studie%20ESDP%20pdf%20version%2005-2007.pdf

Bonacker, Thorsten (2007), ***Debordering by Human Rights. The Challenge of Postterritorial Conflicts in World Society.*** In: Stephan Stetter (Hg.): *Contradictions! Territorial Conflicts in World Society*, London: Routledge, pp. 21-36.

Bibliography on Shur Themes

Davies, J., and Kaufman, E. (2002) ***Second Track/Citizens' Diplomacy. Concepts and Techniques for Conflict Transformation.*** Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.

Both a theoretical reflection and a practical guidance in how to put the concept into practice, the book edited by Davied and Kaufman (from the Center for

International Development and Conflict Management-CIDCM, at the University of Maryland) examines second track diplomacy intended as facilitated dialogue to address conflict issues between unofficial representatives or equivalent opinion leaders from communities in conflict. With contributions written by scholars and practitioners the volume aims to offer thought-full material to both of these categories in they complementary action to official (first track) diplomacy. In the edited book, contributors explain the development, theory and current practice of second track diplomacy by examining the dynamics of modern complex conflicts, such as those in Sri Lanka, Israel/Palestine, Cyprus, or the Caucasus. Exploring innovative problem-solving methodologies, the book provides a detailed program for guiding "Partners in Conflict" in the search for common ground and analyzes core issues that arise in the practice and evaluation of second track diplomacy. This is very much falling in the scope of SHUR research. While SHUR horizon is broader in that human rights violators are included, the content of this book definitely provides a solid ground on which to build our research.

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Glasius, M., Kaldor, M., and Anheier, H. (eds) (2006) **Global Civil Society 2005/6**, London: Sage.

Kaldor, M., Albrow, M., Anheier, H., and Glasius, M. (eds) (2007) **Global Civil Society 2006/7**, London: Sage.

The annual Global Civil Society Yearbooks provide a guide to global civil society or civic participation and action around the world. Each yearbook includes commissioned contributions from leading commentators across the social sciences on the latest issues and developments. Each yearbook also explores and presents the latest approaches to measuring and analyzing global civil society and provides a chronology of key global civil society events in the year. The 2005/6 Yearbook explores the role of gender in global civil society and investigates the core issues of labour migration, climate change and UN reform. In part three, contributions consider the impact of social forums and wireless technology, as well as reviewing the discussion of networks from the 2004/5 Yearbook. Global Civil Society 2006/7 explores, instead, the complex relationship between violence, civil society and legitimacy in a unique dialogue that crosses political, cultural and religious boundaries. Is the use of violence by non-state actors ever justified? How is violence transmitted from the private to the public sphere? Why is terror and 'the war on terror' catalysing rather than suppressing violence? Do Western and Islamic traditions of thought offer any solutions? This edition of the Yearbook also includes new research on economic and social rights, the politics of water, and football. For what concerns SHUR focus, the Yearbooks provides a key reference for understanding the transnational dimension of local conflicts, including aspects such as the ideological underpinning of foreign governmental actors to the concrete actions of international non-governmental actors. In particular, the Yearbook 2006/7 with its focus on violence offers interesting insights to understand the local/transnational dynamics of conflicts.

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Miscellanea

Monitoring-Project on the Conflicts between Turkey and the Kurds (in German only):

<http://www.konfliktbearbeitung.net/downloads/file735.pdf?PHPSESSID=d5f3e86338417312bfc97620d728e7d6>

Culture of Peace

All civil society organizations (NGOs, Institutes, Universities, Schools, Cities, Media) that promote one or more of the eight action areas of the culture of peace are invited by the UN General Assembly to contribute to this report which is for the midpoint of the International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence (UN resolution A/58/11). Human Rights are one of eight action areas.

<http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/>

Call for applications

The Centre on Human Rights in Conflict in the School of Law at the University of East London is seeking applications for a Leverhulme Post-Doctoral Research Fellow to conduct research, publications, and activities on the subject of: Human rights and civil liberties in the context of the war on terror. This is a ten-month position, to be taken up no later than February 2008.

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/chrc/about/index.htm>